

Message Text

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22

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 OMB-01 /092 W

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R 221441Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4535

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 4747

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, SF, NI

SUBJ: IMPACT OF VORSTER VISIT TO ISRAEL

REF : STATE 91610

1. NIGERIAN INFORMATION MEDIA HAVE GIVEN VORSTER'S TRIP TO
ISRAEL STRAIGHT BUT LIMITED COVERAGE. IN ONLY COMMENT THUS FAR,
/OBSERVER/ RAN BITING EDITORIAL CLAIMING THAT VISIT IS PROOF
OF ISRAELI SUPPORT FOR RACISM. LACK OF GOVERNMENT REACTION TO
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DATE SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED AS APPROVAL OF VISIT, HOWEVER,

FMG HAS ADOPTED A VERY HARD LINE ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES AND WE ARE CERTAIN ISRAEL'S HOSTING OF SOUTH AFRICAN LEADER HAS NOT GONE UNNOTICED BY POLICY MAKERS. CERTAINLY ISRAEL HAS NOT WON ANY NEW SUPPORTERS IN FMG BY PERMITTING VISIT TO TAKE PLACE. IT IS LIKELY THAT VISIT STRENGTHENED THE POSITION OF THOSE WITHIN FMG WHO ARE OPPOSED TO ANY NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH TEL AVIV.

2. AS FOR IMPACT ON FMG ATTITUDES TOWARD ISRAELI MEMBERSHIP IN THE UN, WE SUSPECT PROONENTS OF EXPULSION WILL BE ABLE TO USE THE VISIT TO GOOD ADVANTAGE DURING ANY FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF THE QUESTION. THE FACT THAT THE VISIT TOOK PLACE AT ALL WILL MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR MODERATES TO STAND UP AND MAKE A CASE FOR CONTINUED ISRAELI MEMBERSHIP. AS WAS SEEN DURING ANGOLAN CRISIS, CURRENT NIGERIAN LEADERSHIP IS LIKELY TO LOOK ON ANY DEMONSTRATION OF FRIENDSHIP FOR SOUTH AFRICA AS INIMICAL TO INTERESTS OF INDEPENDENT BLACK AFRICA AND TO REGARD SOUTH AFRICAN SUPPORT AS INHERENTLY BAD.

3. ONE ATCOME OF VISIT MAY BE TO NUDGE THE FMG CLOSER TO THE MORE RADICAL ARAB POSITION. SUCH A TENDENCY WILL BE STRENGTHENED BY THE FMG'S DESIRE TO PLAY A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT. POLICY MAKERS WILL LIKELY CONCLUDE THAT SUPPORT FOR THE ARAB CAUSE IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS MORE LIKELY ENHANCE NIGERIA'S ROLE THAN IS AN EVEN HANDED APPROACH TO THE ARAB/ISRAEL CONFRONTATION. THIS WOULD CERTAINLY BE SO IF HIGH-LEVEL ISRAELIS RECIPROcate VISIT OR IF VORSTER VISIT RESULTS IN ARMS DEALS OR INCREASED COMMERCIAL TIES BETWEEN PRETORIA AND TEL AVIV.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, CHIEF OF STATE VISITS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 APR 1976
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LAGOS04747
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760154-0274
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760434/aaaabcv.cvc.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 91610
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <10 SEP 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IMPACT OF VORSTER VISIT TO ISRAEL
TAGS: PFOR, IS, SF, NI, (VORSTER, BALTHAZAR J)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006